



# Arkansas House Newsletter

July 5, 2019

## Cutting the Red Tape in Arkansas



Arkansas had one of the most productive, if not most productive, legislative sessions in the country with regard to addressing occupational regulations. Occupational regulations are licensures, certifications, or registrations required for workers in certain occupations. A few examples of licensed occupations include real estate agents, cosmetologists, and veterinarians.

The success during the legislative session is partly due to Arkansas participating in the 15-state learning consortium through the U.S. Department of Labor (supported by the National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL), National Governors Association for Best Practices (NGA), and The Council of State Governments (CSG)) and further addressing occupational licensure through the Governor's Red Tape Reduction Working Group.

For the 2019 legislative session, 41 bills were passed into law that were related to occupational licensing, certification, and registration. One of the new laws (Act 250) ensures that an individual does not lose a license due to a defaulted or delinquent student loan. Another law (Act 820) provides automatic licensure for active duty members, veterans and spouses of military members if they were practicing in another state.

Those forty-one acts can be categorized into specific areas of concern that were discussed as part of the Red Tape Reduction Working Group and the related, Occupational Licensing Advisory Group, including:

- (1) Removing Barriers to entry and having the least restrictive regulations in place.
- (2) Addressing impacted populations; e.g., military spouses/ veterans/ military members, those with criminal records, and immigrants.
- (3) Focusing on licensing board composition.
- (4) Engaging in reciprocity agreements & multi-state compacts.
- (5) Various administrative and organizational improvements.

One of the acts passed was Act 600 which creates annual legislative reviews of occupational authorizations and entities. This will help to ensure that we continue implementing the least restrictive form of authorization while protecting consumers.

In June, the Occupational Licensing Review Subcommittee of Legislative Council met to draft rules and begin establishing a timeline of occupations to be reviewed this year. The occupational authorizations and occupational entities will be divided into six groups. The committee will review one group each year. The subcommittee will meet again on September 19. You can review the materials and watch the proceedings at [www.arkleg.state.ar.us](http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us).